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effectual methods for fighting mosquitoes and swamp-flies." But even in the tropics swamp-flies and gnats can at least be locally abolished by a thorough system of drainage, and the terrestrial supremacy of man, after all, encounters its most formidable rivals in the tribe of rodent mammals. Individually the largest members of that tribe are hardly a match for a half-grown boy; but their lack of relative powers is more than equalized by the versatility of their mental and physical faculties, and above all by their irrepressible fecundity. The colonists of New Zealand are the Yankees of the South Sea, as plucky descendants of North British ancestors as ever framed a pontoon bridge or constitution, but after the experience of the last fifteen years are forced to acknowledge that the rabbits thus far have proved too much for them, and that at all events the odious little quadrupeds have given them ten times as much trouble as the biped Maoris. In the course of the last fifty years the aboriginal population has decreased from 210,000 to less than 40,000, while during the same period the rabbit census shows an estimated increase of 12,500,000 per cent. In many parts of the North Island the plague has assumed dimensions defying such remedies as traps and poison, *i. e.*, the largest possible number which the resources of the colonists would enable them to destroy in that way would represent less than the current increase of the survivors. All the available cash of the island, invested in strychnine and steel traps, would barely suffice to check that increase, and would utterly fail to abolish, or even to visibly abate, the nuisance. Ferrets are doing their best, but their propagation fails to keep up with that of their enemies, and bounties have led to a rather unexpected result; scores of tramps, having conceived the plan of eking out a comfortable subsistence by *promoting* the increase of the remunerative pets, are now killing out their natural enemies and obliterating decoy trenches and pitfalls, very much after the plan of the enterprising editor who hired panders to keep up his stock of Pall Mall sensations. Aroostook County, Maine, is threatened with a similar experience by the phenomenal increase of rats, and, judging from recent reports, the city of Norwich, Connecticut, too, is being grievously terrorized by the results of nightly ratification meetings. Rats by thousands and tens of thousands congregate in the neighborhood of the wharves, and often, as by common agreement, make a dash for a warehouse or plunder a freight car, with the co-operative will of a New York boodle syndicate.

A less concentrated, but more permanent, plague is that of the Alleghany flying squirrels, the "winged weasels," that slip through every cranny of an old country-house and develop an appetite that could digest Crabbe's "Treatise on Speculative Theology." They will gnaw up an oiled pair of cowhide boots in a single night. Their needlelike teeth penetrate horn and caoutchouc. They are ravenously fond of bacon, but in stress of circumstances will carry off bagsful of hard corn and pignuts. In Eastern Tennessee their ravages often oblige housewives to hang up their stores of provender in bundles dangling from the upper rafters of the ceiling; but all precautions are in vain against the talents of a marauder that can climb, dig, jump, gnaw and crawl, as well as run and fly. The owl-eyed little pests are of semi-nocturnal habits, and make their nests in hollow trees; but even the total destruction of the sheltering forests would fail to exterminate the night-squirrel, for in well-settled districts its wriggling youngsters—seven or eight of them, twice a year—are often found in haystacks or under the floor-planks of old barns.

FELIX L. OSWALD.

#### IV.

#### WHY AM I A MISSIONARY?

THIS question is not one bounded by denominational lines, but can be answered by almost every Christian church in almost the same terms, as a non-mission church may be called a non-Christian church.

I. I am inspired by the encouragements presented. The Christian world is earnestly engaged in the work of foreign missions. It has become an established part of church work, engaging its best talent both at home and on the foreign field. The latest available statistics tell us that the following sums are being contributed annually for this great work :

82 American societies contributed.....	\$8,011,027
28 British societies contributed.....	5,217,885
27 Continental societies contributed.....	1,088,170
Total, 87 societies, contributed.....	\$9,311,582

With this large sum,

American societies are employing.....	986 men and 1,081 women.
British societies are employing.....	1,811 men and 745 women.
Continental societies are employing.....	777 men and 447 women.
Total.....	3,561 men and 2,274 women.

These societies have the following visible results as testimony to their faithfulness in their appointed work :

Members pertaining to American societies .....	242,738
Members pertaining to British societies .....	340,242
Members pertaining to Continental societies .....	117,532
Total membership in heathen lands.....	700,507

This is larger than the membership of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and the amount expended is nearly the same that said church spent at home last year for her own current expenses. But foreign missions have not only gained this large number of converts from heathenism, they have also the following educational work to report :

American societies have in schools .....	124,813 children.
British societies have in schools .....	434,774 children.
Continental societies have in schools .....	67,154 children.
Total .....	626,741 children.

In addition to all this, missionary ships, freighted with "The Word of Life," sail on many seas and steam on the lakes of Central Africa. Hundreds of papers, in almost as many languages, "drop their leaves for the healing of the nations." Moreover, modern missions are yet in their infancy. The past has been a time of seed sowing. The oldest American society, the American Board, was born in 1810, and of the British and Continental societies, all but six were established within the last eighty years.

II. There is grand inspiration in the history of the cause. Missions have always been important factors, in the providence of God, in giving to the world the civilization it now enjoys. St. Boniface is known to every student of ecclesiastical history as the Apostle of Germany, who did an untold amount of good in checking the tide of barbarism and heathenism that was rolling from the north down on to the ruins of the old empire. He died like a true soldier, receiving the mortal blow from a heathen while holding above his head the gospels he had so loved to preach. The work of Augustine in England, under commission from Gregory the Great, as recorded by Hume, is another picture of the same kind. The labors of St. Patrick in Ireland, though distorted by distance and tradition (the illegitimate offspring of history), show him to have been a blessing to his people. The work of Columba among the Celtic Picts and Scots of Caledonia is still bearing fruit, and our own fair land is still debtor to that work. Now, the methods that destroyed the cruel heathenism and bloody barbarism of the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries are again vindicating their divine origin by breaking

caste and cruelty in India, witchcraft in Siam and Laos, cannibalism in the islands of the sea, the conservatism of China, and the ignorance of Spanish America.

III. There is goodly fellowship in the work. Missions have given to the world the lives of such men as Robert Moffat, of South Africa; Dr. Livingstone, his son in law, of all Africa; Robert Morrison, of China; Henry Martyn, of Persia; Adoniram Judson and his wives, of Burmah; Schwartz, of India; Egede, of Greenland, and a host of others as worthy of canonization as any saint in the Roman calendar.

IV. Because missions, by the blessing of God, their author, can and do regenerate nations. They have reduced scores of languages to writing, and have given a literature to many lands. In Japan, where twenty-five years ago there was not a single paper in circulation, there are now more than in all the rest of Asia combined; more than in Russia and Spain together. She is casting away her old cumbersome alphabet, if such it can be called, and adopting the Roman letters. She is filling theatres with thousands hungering and thirsting for the Gospel. The Bible will do for Japan and other nations what it has done for England and America.

V. I am a missionary because, while our Saviour taught us to pray "Thy kingdom come," He also said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Praying and working must go together. That church is not truly evangelical (evangelizing) which preaches the Gospel in but one language.

MARION E. BEALL.

## V.

### SIBERIA AND LAND-TENURE.

THE critic, like the judge, should examine with strict impartiality, subordinating his personal predilections to an honest endeavor of arriving at a just conclusion, whether it is an agreeable one or not.

But how often do we find, rather, "the wish father to the thought"? This at any rate appears to be the case with Mr. G. T. Ferris, in his article entitled "Practice vs. Theory," in THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW for July, wherein he attempts to demonstrate the inadequacy of the land value tax by a citation from Mr. George Kennan's "Siberia," published in the current *Century*.

He assumes that the citation in point is analogous to a practical application of the theory.

That it is not such a case Mr. Ferris acknowledges further on by allowing the exceptions.

Substantially, the objection advanced is that insecure tenure is subversive of the best use of land, to which Georgism replies—Amen.

Herein rests the strength and potency of Georgism, so-called. It is the ultimate of the theory—it compels the best use of the natural bounties of land.

It is evident to the most superficial observer that no one can afford to waste the opportunities the land offers and continue to pay its rental value to the community in the form of a tax, especially as the tax would be the same in amount, whether the most was made of the opportunity or not.

The occupier must put it to its best use or be eaten out by taxation, just as at present the State sells the property, improvements and all, should the owner fail to pay his taxes; only we now levy a tax on land value and improvements.

The scheme is to shift the tax from improvements and concentrate it and all other taxes upon the value of land alone.

Ownership of land does not insure its best utilization. There is land in this country which has been owned by one family since the time of George III.,